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Improving the Literacy or Mathematics Program

The initial training of English language arts and mathematics coaches from comprehensive schools occurred on September 9-10, 2008. This newsletter provides an overview of the training and is written especially for principals and district staff of the instructional coaches.

➤ You will want to discuss the training in detail with your coaches with the information here serving as good starting points for discussion.

About Our Trainers of Coaches

We are privileged to have two extraordinary trainers of instructional coaches to help us throughout this process.

Sonia Caus Gleason hails from Boston, MA with 20 years of experience as an educator, data coach and professional trainer. She has provided training in numerous urban districts and state departments of education.

Cheryl Williams is a master facilitator and trainer from New Hampshire. Her focus areas are school improvement, leadership training, and high-performance team development. Cheryl currently works with the New Hampshire



and Utah Departments of Education and the Boston Public Schools.

The Differentiated Accountability Model

The training on September 9 began with Lee Ann Kwiatkowski, Director of Title I, explaining Indiana's Differentiated Accountability Model and expectations of schools, principals, teachers and instructional coaches. The expectations are based upon the characteristics of high performing, high poverty districts and schools. Research indicates the characteristics include:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging and differentiated instruction • Data and formative assessments to inform instruction • A vision of high expectations for all students • High quality, on-going professional development • Attention to the culture of students, classroom, schools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum aligned to the standards • Shared leadership • Partnerships with parents, families and community |
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The instructional coaches will focus on providing assistance to school staff particularly in the areas of curriculum, instruction and formative assessments.

The Role of the Instructional Coach

The role of the instructional coaches is to use a variety of coaching processes, e.g., modeling, co-teaching, observing, conducting grade level meetings and other methods to assist in the professional development of school staff. Through the instructional coaches, the skills and abilities of staff increase as related to the teaching of literacy or math, especially for those students with the greatest need. ➤ Remember, the role of the coach is to work with teachers - *not* with students.

To support the coaches, IDOE will utilize an on-line open source software program called "Moodle." Through this secure site coaches access documents and materials from IDOE and communicate with one another and Title I. ➤ Coaches are expected to regularly complete their communication log to briefly describe the supports that they provided to teachers. The logs serve as one of several measures of effectiveness of the Differentiated Accountability Model.

Indiana's Formative Assessments

A highpoint of the two-day coaches' training was the presentations from two practitioners on Indiana's diagnostic assessments. Both sessions were extremely valuable to the participants.



Wireless Generation Unleashed!

Holly Mencer, a Reading First coach from Hawthorne Elementary in Warren Township provided valuable information on the diagnostic tool, *Wireless Generation*. Holly's school, which was named a Title I Distinguished Schools in 2008, has successfully implemented the tool. During her presentation, Holly focused on:

- Using data to determine interventions for students.
- The importance of visually displaying and continually updating the data for all to see (e.g., data walls).
- The need to start slowly with one data source and increase the number of sources over time.

Holly emphasized that all students at Hawthorne receive an additional 30 minutes of literacy intervention or enrichment each day as a primary support to their E/LA development. We will look forward to learning more from Holly!

Acuity in Action

Tamara Skinner, an intervention specialist with Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation, presented the diagnostic tool, *Acuity*, which her district piloted in 2007-08. Tamara shared a number of "lessons learned" from her experience in administering Acuity district-wide (see "Tips for Schools," p. 3).

Using actual student Acuity data, Tamara led the audience in reviewing and determining appropriate instructional practices based on the data. She emphasized the fact that understanding student data is *the* key component in providing appropriate instruction. Tamara will continue to build the coaches knowledge in this area in the future!



TIPS for Schools!

Successful Test Administration with Acuity

- Allow extra time in first round of tests.
- Print student passwords on index cards (if testing online)
- Print out stories for 3rd graders (if testing online).
- Model use of the scroll bar to manipulate page.
- Encourage students to take test seriously; offer incentives.
- Have students begin the test on different questions to reduce copying from others.
- Hold teachers' data workshops as soon as results are received.

"Taking the Lead"

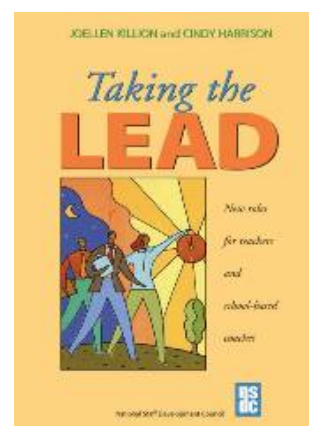
A resource for instructional coaches to be used throughout the year-long training is an excellent book titled: "Taking the Lead: New Roles for Teachers and School-based Coaches." Purchased by IDOE for all the coaches, this book outlines the various roles of instructional coaches:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| ▪ Resource provider | ▪ Data coach |
| ▪ Curriculum specialist | ▪ Instructional specialist |
| ▪ Classroom supporter | ▪ Mentor |
| ▪ Learning facilitator | ▪ School leader |
| ▪ Catalyst for change | ▪ Learner |

➤ Principals and district staff would benefit from reading this book, as well, with chapters such as, "Selecting Coaches," "District Support," "Evaluation," and "Troubleshooting."

➤ Order yours today!

Killion, J. & Harrison, C. (2006). *New roles for teachers and school-based coaches*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council.



Collaboration

How does your school function? As a set of individual teachers "doing their own thing"? As cliques of grade-level teams? As "old" and "new" teachers? People in organizations naturally group themselves in different ways to function more efficiently, to work alongside "others like us" and for numerous other reasons. However, it is important that groups learn to work as a whole, outside of their smaller groups – to *collaborate* towards a common purpose.

Collaboration, according to our trainers, is central to the success of the instructional coaching process. Coaches – and their principals – need to foster a spirit of collaboration among the adults in the school. A set of tools to assist in developing this collaborative process was

introduced to the coaches: "The Seven Norms of Collaboration."* The norms are behaviors that have been shown to lead to highly functioning and effective groups. You will be hearing more about these seven practices throughout the year. ➤ Here's one to get you started:

- *Norm #2*: Pause before responding or asking a question; allow time for thinking and listening.
- *Practice*: After speaking in a group, wait until three others have spoken before speaking again.

* Center for Adaptive Schools, (2006). "The Seven Norms of Collaboration." Retrieved 9/20/08 from <http://www.adaptiveschools.com/pdf/SevenNormsToolkit.pdf>

How People Respond to Change: The Concerns-based Adoption Model

Change? How do *you* handle it? Are you eager or resistant to it? According

to research, people tend to respond to change through a series of stages or steps. Knowing these stages and recognizing them in others is important when any new process or system begins in an organization, such as the introduction of instructional coaches in a school. Instructional coaching – as defined by IDOE – is new to many teachers and staff. How people respond to and decide to utilize the instructional coaches will change over time, is individual, and occurs through multiple stages (0-6) as described below.

<u>Stage of Concern*</u>	<u>A Person's Expression of "Concern"</u>
6. Refocusing	"I have ideas how this could work even better!"
5. Collaboration	"How can I work with others in what I am doing?"
4. Consequence	"How will doing this affect my learners? Is it helping them?"
3. Management	"I seem to be spending all my time getting ready – preparing materials."
2. Personal	"How is this going to affect me? Will it mean more work?"
1. Informational	"Hmm – I would like to hear more about this."
0. Awareness	"I'm not concerned about this – it will go away."

➤ You, as principals, and your coaches will want to watch for teachers and staff to indicate their increasing willingness to be involved with the coaching process through statements or behaviors similar to those above, noting that some teachers will move faster through the stages than others. Consider the advice given by our trainers:

➤ *"Work with those first who are eager and ready for your support as coaches. Have some early successes with a few teachers. The rest will likely follow along when they are ready."*

*Adapted from: Hord, S.M., Rutherford, W., Austin Huling, A., & Hall, G. (1987). *Taking charge of change*. (pgs. 101-105). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

What's Next?

The first week in October

- Coaches:** Participate in a one-hour phone call with a small group of coaches and trainers Sonia or Cheryl.
- Principals:** Please allow your instructional coach to participate in this one-hour phone call.
- Purpose:**
- For each coach to present an update on his/her coaching and share one challenge.
 - To participate in a discussion of challenges and potential solutions.

November 5-6, 2008

- Coaches:** Required attendance at both days of the training.
- Principals:** Required attendance at the second day (Nov. 6). You may attend the first day (Nov. 5) if you wish.
- Place:** The Fountains Conference Center, Carmel, IN

Watch for more details soon!

COACHES, don't forget to complete your communication logs!

Questions? Where to go at IDOE!

We would like to assist you with your questions by directing you to the appropriate person or office at the IDOE.

For [general questions](#) contact:

Becky Johnson - Support Specialist, Office of Title I Academic Support

Email: bjohnson@doe.in.gov

Toll free number: 877-418-7240 or 317-232-0540

- Becky will give your question to the appropriate person: trainers Sonia or Cheryl or Title I Director, Lee Ann.
- If your question is one that might be beneficial to other coaches, Becky will post the question and its answer on Moodle.

For questions about the diagnostic tool [Wireless Generation](#) contact:

Jen Oliver - Assessment Specialist, Office of Student Assessment, joliver@doe.in.gov

For questions about the diagnostic tool [Acuity](#) contact:

Charity Flores - Assessment Specialist, Office of Student Assessment, cflores@doe.in.gov

For questions about the [Differentiated Accountability Model](#) contact:

Lee Ann Kwiatkowski – Director, Office of Title I Academic Support, lkwiat@doe.in.gov

**We look
forward to
talking with you
in October!**